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**Release of Tamil Nadu Software**

4528. SHRI T.T.V. DHINAKARAN: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have released Tamil Software recently;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) how long it took for developing each software together with the name of developer; and

(d) whether the State Government were consulted on the utility and distribution of the sofware?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEELAHMAD):

(a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) The details are given in the Statement (See below).

(d) The Tamil Software tools and fonts contained in the CD were compliant with the standards laid down by the State Government and its institutions such as Tamil Virtual University.

***Statement***

*Tamil Software released by Government*

Ministry of Communications and Information Technology, Government of India released free CDs containing "Tamil Sofware Tools and Fonts" on 15th April, 2005 at Chennai.

The CD contents and the respective contributors were:—

* Tamil Language True Type Fonts (TTF)—100 nos. (C-DAC, GIST, Pune-50 nos.; CK Technologies-50 nos.)
* Unicode compatible Open Type Fonts for Tamil (OTF)-120 nos. (C-DAC, GIST, Pune-50 nos.; Modular systems, Pune-20 nos.; CADGRAF digital Private Limited-50 nos.)
* Tamil Language version of Bharatiya 00 (Open Source) (This includes word processor, presentation, spreadsheet and drawing tools)
  (C-DAC, Bangalore)
* Firefox Browser in Tamil
  (C-DAC, Bangalore)
* E-mail client in Tamil
  (C-DAC, Bangalore)
* Tamil OCR
  (Learn Fun Systems, Chennai)
* Tamil Spell Checker
  (AU-KBC, Chennai)
* Tamil Dictionary

(English-English-Tamil and Tamil-Tamil-English)

(Palaniappa Brothers, Chennai) Apart from making CDs for the occasion, provision for downloading of the above from www.ildc.in was also indicated. The above consisted of:

* some software tools and fonts developed and announced for the first time (as in the case of Bharatiya 00 Tamil language version, Firefox browser in Tamil, e-mail client in Tamil, Unicode compliant OTFs for Tamil from C-DAC);
* making available licensed/private products into unlimited, free release (as in the case of TTFs of C-DAC, TTFs of CK Technologies, OTFs of Modular Systems, CADGRAF Digital Private Limited;
* releasing for free use some moderately mature but still developing products (as in the case of OCR of Learn Fun Systems and Spell Checker of AU-KBC)

and were made available to the public.

While different components of the contents took different periods (some having been developed in the last one month to one year while some having been developed earlier and also been in the market), the key aspect has been that ever since the formation of the committee on Tehnology Development for Indian Language in Department of Information Technology, Ministry of Communications and Information Technology in November, 2004, the thrust has been to promote what was available or being developed in R&D labs to be made widely usable by the public quickly with a view to:

* Popularize use of computers in local languages
* Do so by making use of computers in local language affordable to the masses and thus bridge the digital divide
* Forge public-private-partnership wherever possible to enable meaningful aggregation of software tools and fonts
* Encourage moderately mature tools to be freely made available to the public and developers so that valuable feedback is also received early to enable them to improve their technologies and tools pased on feedback.

Based on the above approach, the Tamil CD mentioned earlier was released. It is thus an important and meaningful step done consciously as a matter of policy. The significance of the CD release is that still a large number of users (and potential users) do not have access to internet and the concept of downloading is still alien to many of the first timers.

Apart from Tamilnadu, nationwide and worldover also, this initiative has been receiving enormous positive response. Within a short period of 2-3 days, close to 20,000 downloads of the contents took place and over 26,000 requests for CD & registration were received. This showed the response to the timely and much needed initiative of this kind from the user/potential user community.

**Telecommunication facilities in Bihar**

4529. SHRI MOTIUR RAHMAN: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the areas in Bihar which are deficient in telecommunication facilities;

(b) the requests received in this regard the last year and the current year so far;

(c) the action taken thereon; and

(d) the proposals for expansion of these activities in Bihar?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) (i) The waiting list in Urban and Rural Areas in Bihar as on 31.03.2005 is 27385 and 69486 respectively. This waiting list is almost evenly spread in the entire State.

(ii) There is unfulfilled demand of mobile connection in almost all districts of Bihar which is due to controlled supply of SIM cards due to capacity constraints of GSM network.

(iii) The availability of power supply is very poor in Bihar which is affecting the operations of telecommunication services.